

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 L-03 IO-13 HA-05 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 AID-05 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00
COME-00 /108 W

-----074227 111501Z /46

R 101430Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9380
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 8462

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, GW, NI
SUBJECT: THE COMMUNIQUE CAPER

REF: A) BONN 12329, B) LAGOS 8172, C) LAGOS 8101

1. IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE SCHMIDT VISIT TO LAGOS, THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY HERE HAS BEEN TITILLATED BY SPECULATION ABOUT THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE SIGNED BY SCHMIDT AND OBASANJO AND THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE NIGERIANS WITHHELD FROM THEIR PUBLIC, AS FAR AS THEY POSSIBLY COULD, THE PASSAGES RELATING TO SOUTHERN AFRICA.

2. THE SPECULATION RESULTED INITIALLY FROM THE FACT THAT THE TEXT OF THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED ON JUNE 29 BY THE FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INFORMATION DID NOT CONTAIN ANY PASSAGES ON RHODESIA, NAMIBIA, AND SOUTH AFRICA. (ON THE BASIS OF THAT TEXT, WE REPORTED INCORRECTLY IN REF C
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THAT THE COMMUNIQUE GENERALLY AVOIDED MENTION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA). SUBSEQUENTLY, HOWEVER, THE FRG EMBASSY ISSUED THE FULL TEXT OF THE COMMUNIQUE AS CONTAINED IN REF A.

3. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE FMG TEXT WAS A SIMPLE BUREAUCRATIC ERROR. HOWEVER, INDIVIDUAL

PARAGRAPHS, NOT WHOLE PAGES, WERE LEFT OUT.
IN ADDITION, IT IS RELEVANT TO NOTE THAT THE
NIGERIAN PRESS TENDS TO PUBLISH THE FULL TEXTS
OF STATE VISIT COMMUNIQUE. THE DAILY TIMES
MANAGED TO PUBLISH MUCH OF THE FULL TEXT,
WHICH THEY REPORTEDLY PICKED
UP FROM THE FRG EMBASSY.

4. CONJECTURES ABOUT THE MOTIVATION FOR THE
FMG'S ACTION HAVE CENTERED ON THE ASSUMPTION
THAT THE AGREED TEXT, ALTHOUGH DIFFICULT FOR
THE FRG TO LIVE WITH (REF A), WAS NOT STRONG
ENOUGH IN THE OTHER DIRECTION TO MEET THE FMG'S
LOCAL PUBLIC RELATIONS CONCERNS. LOCAL PRESS
COMMENT ON THE VISIT WAS HEAVILY
ANTAGONISTIC; INDEED, THE FRG EMBASSY PRESS
ATTACHE TOLD US THAT THE GERMANS HAD BEEN
SURPRISED AND DISAPPOINTED BY HOW NEGATIVE
THE NIGERIAN PRESS HAD BEEN. THUS IT IS POSSIBLE
THAT THE FMG MAY HAVE FEARED A PRESS BEATING OVER
THE "WEAK" LANGUAGE IN THE COMMUNIQUE, PARTICULARLY
IN THE FACE OF SCHMIDT'S BLUNT TALK ABOUT MAINTAIN-
ING FRG-SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE LINKS. IN ADDITION,
THE COMMUNIQUE CHARADE MAY INDICATE THAT THE
NIGERIANS ARE FEELING LESS SECURE VIS-A-VIS THE
WEST ON NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA THAN THEY FELT A
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FEW MONTHS AGO. ALTHOUGH THE LANGUAGE IN THE FRG-
NIGERIAN COMMUNIQUE ON BOTH ISSUES GENERALLY
PARALLELS LANGUAGE IN THE US-NIGERIAN COMMUNIQUE
ISSUED AT THE TIME OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT TO
LAGOS, THE FMG MAY HAVE DECIDED ON REFLECTION
THAT SUCH LANGUAGE WAS NOT STRONG ENOUGH IN THE
LIGHT OF THE GENERAL LACK OF FORWARD MOVEMENT
ON BOTH ISSUES AND EVENTS SUCH AS THE CASSINGA
RAID.
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